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In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for use in an access point in a wireless communications environment including multiple access points and stations, wherein stations gain network access by associating with one or more of the access points, comprising:  
  
collecting bid messages from stations, each bid message including a parameter related to the distance between the access point and the station; and  
  
sending an accept message to one of the stations from which a bid message was received, the accept message for causing the station to associate with the access point.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of sending an accept message sends an accept message to the station whose bid message included the parameter indicating the largest change in distance.
3. (original) The method of claim 2 wherein the accept message is sent only if a maximum number of station associations has not been exceeded.
4. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of maintaining a table including an entry for each station from which a bid message has been received, each entry including the parameter.
5. (original) A method for use in an access point in a wireless communications environment including multiple access points and stations, wherein stations gain network access by associating with one or more of the access points, comprising:

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collecting bid messages from stations, each bid message including a parameter related to the distance between the access point and the station;

maintaining a table including an entry for each station from which a bid message has been received, each entry including the parameter; and

sending an accept message to the station in the table having the parameter indicating the closest distance, the accept message for causing the station to associate with the access point.